DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 150 383 08 CE 014 668

AUTHOR Myers, Douglas D.; And Others
TITLE Case Study Report #12. Bob and Jane Hockum.
INSTITUTION Mountain-Plains Education and Economic Development Program, Inc., Glasgow AFB, Mont.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Jul 75
CONTRACT NE-C-00-3-0298
NOTE 30p.; For related documents see CE 014 658-681 and ED 110 610 ; Some pages may not reproduce clearly

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Education; Case Studies; Community Involvement; Counseling Services; Demonstration Programs; *Disadvantaged Groups; Economically Disadvantaged; Educationally Disadvantaged; *Employment Experience; Family Programs; Federal Programs; Followup Studies; Income; Individualized Programs; Job Placement; Job Training; Participant Satisfaction; Program Effectiveness; *Residential Programs; *Student Characteristics; Student Development; *Student Participation; Student Problems
IDENTIFIERS Mountain Plains Program

ABSTRACT

This document presents one in a series of twenty-three case studies derived from in-depth interviews using a sampling of former participants in the Mountain-Plains program, a residential, family-based education program developed to improve the economic potential and lifestyle of selected student families in a six-state area. Each case study contains the following information about a specific student family: biographical data; participation in the educational and community programs; home, income, placement, and employment data; stated problems and/or satisfactions; summaries of the participants' personal and social development; individual ratings of the program; scripts of personal interviews; interviewer comments; and individual test scores and self-assessments. This document presents specific findings on Bob and Jane Hockum, who entered the program with five children and a sporadic work history. The follow-up study reports that Bob completed an occupational training program but has continued to frequently change jobs after leaving Mountain-Plains. (Names in these studies have been changed.) Two other documents are included in the series: a report which examines work and income variables for the group (ED 110 610) and a report which summarizes group findings on personal and social development (CE 014 681). Specific documentation for the instruments utilized in the study are included in both of these related documents. (BM)

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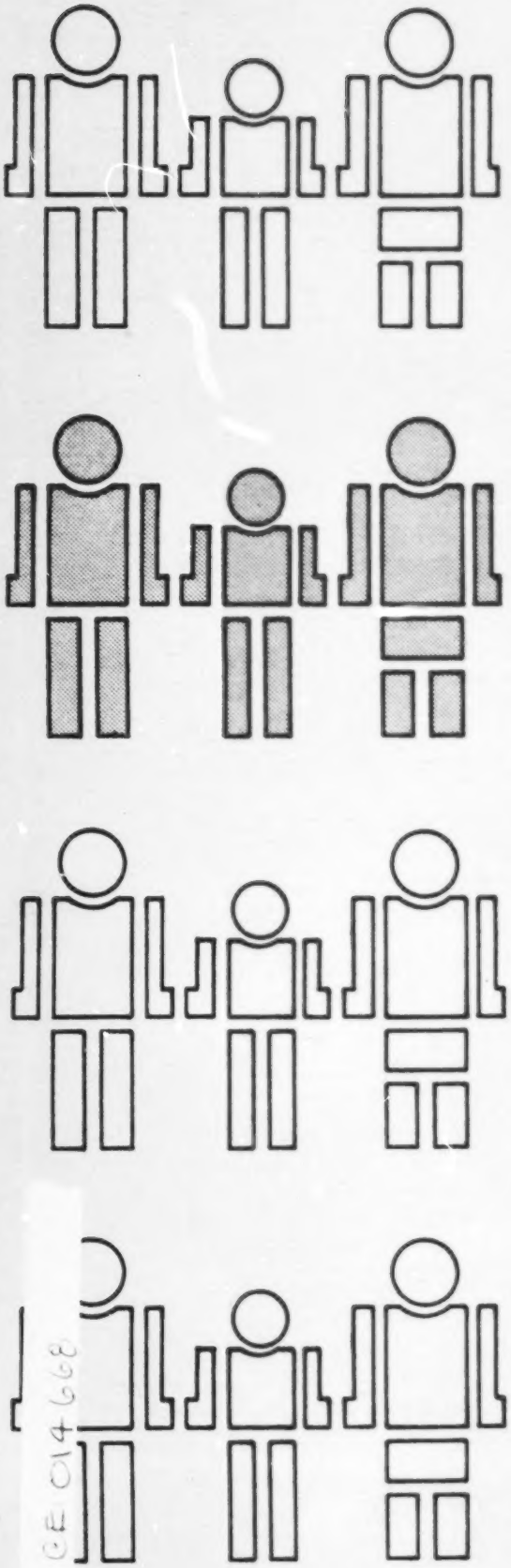

CASE STUDY REPORT #12

Bob and Jane Hockum

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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CE 014 668

MOUNTAIN PLAINS EDUCATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM INC.

CASE STUDY REPORT

BOB AND JANE HOCKUM

Authors:

Douglas D. Myers
Rowan W. Conrad
David A. Coyle

Series Editor:

Michael C. Fenenbock

July, 1975

A Product of Research Services Division
David A. Coyle, Director

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PREFACE

Reports in this series are derived from in depth interviews using a stratified random sample of former Mountain-Plains students. Interviews were conducted from November, 1974 through January, 1975 by Mountain-Plains professional research staff. Case Study Report 1 examines Work and Income variables for the group. Case Study Reports 2 through 24 include specific findings on each family included in the sampling. Case Study Report 25 summarizes group findings on personal and social development. A summary of the research design for the Case Study Reports is documented in: Coyle, David A.; Conrad, Rowan W.; and Myers, Douglas D. In Depth Case Study of Exited Families: A Summary of the Research Design for Phase 1 Preliminary Effects Study. Glasgow, Montana: Mountain-Plains Press, 1974. Specific documentation for the instruments utilized in the study are included in either Case Study Report 1 or Case Study Report 25. All names in these studies have been changed.

Michael C. Fenenbock
Series Editor

David A. Coyle
Director, Research
Services Division

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CASE STUDY REPORT

BOB AND JANE HOCKUM

BACKGROUND

The Hockum family--Bob, his wife Jane, and their five children ranging in age from 9 to 2--applied to Mountain-Plains in January 1972. A resident of Idaho, Bob's employment history was spotty; in the previous year he held 5 jobs, all manual labor employment. His highest wage was $400 per month and the average was some $306 per month.

At the time of application, Bob was employed on an onion farm. Having done seasonal work for years, he was interested in gaining a skill and becoming self sufficient. His vocational interests at the time of entry included mechanics and baker. Jane applied with no specific occupational area in mind. She had been employed several years before as a field worker--piece rate work. The Hockum's calculated their gross income for the previous year at $2500--mainly due to Bob's spotty employment record--and during the previous 12 months, the family had received Aid for Dependent Children totalling $1000. Additionally they received food stamps, and the children utilized the free school lunch program. The food stamps equaled $43 for $86 worth of stamps. The Hockum's had no savings account, no checking account, no life insurance, no medical insurance, and did not utilize a budget. The family were not active in social organizations and devoted no time to volunteer activities--nor had they contacted public officials in an attempt to improve their community. Family recreational activities were

recorded as television, card games and outdoor activities. Bob indicated he spent most of his spare time working on the car and playing with the children.

The family housing--a 5 room house which included no telephone--was rented for $50 per month, plus some $60 per month for utilities. During the previous 5 years the Hockum's had moved 6 times and lived in 3 states--Idaho, Oregon and California. They subscribed to no magazines or newspapers; however, they did have someone they could call a family doctor and they felt that the family was relatively happy.

The family's initial interview was accomplished by Mountain-Plains Idaho staff, who stated, "The family resides in a laborer's house on Wilson farm. They are rural and live a very mobile transient life. The family relationships are impressive. They repond well to each other and appear to be close."

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

While at Mountain-Plains Bob entered the occupational area of upholsterer. Jane entered no occupational area, but, did complete the support component--Family Core Curriculum--of the Mountain-Plains Program. The Hockum's counselor recalls Bob as an easy going individual who did not take initiative in interpersonal relationships. Jane, however, was reported to be quite the opposite, "She's very vocal, very religious oriented." Jane, the counselor reports, would comprehend a situation, then play whatever role would turn the situation to her advantage. The Hockum's exited the program in March

1974, having been in the program for a period of 14 months--considerably longer than most students.

PLACEMENT

Upon exiting Mountain-Plains, Bob was placed as an upholsterer for the Big M Upholstery Company in Smally, Idaho at a salary of $2.50 per hour. Shortly after, and in fairly rapid succession, Bob had two other jobs--one with A.A. Smith and Company in Boise as a raker for an asphalt company earning $3.25 per hour and another with Firestone Company in Caldwell, Idaho as a station attendant for $2.25 per hour. Apparently Bob was having difficulty finding employment that he could enjoy and find fulfillment in. Since exiting the program Bob has had a total of 5 jobs--again, not a very strong employment record. He has worked in a number of different places including the upholstery shop, the asphalt company, and a gas station. Bob also worked as a laborer for a mobile home company and is currently employed as an upholsterer for a camper manufacturing company. Unfortunately, Bob's success in procuring a stable employment history leaves much to be desired. During the course of the 6 months preceding the interview, Bob had been unemployed a total of 6 weeks.

HOME AND INCOME

The Hockum family has not increased in size--they still have five children. Jane has been unemployed since exiting the program and is not currently looking for work. Jane received a GED while at Mountain-Plains, something that her husband did not attempt to do. They have obtained no welfare benefits during the past 6

months and have received no unemployment compensation. When asked if they had any additional sources of income, the Hockums responded yes, and indicated that Bob worked part time for himself as an upholsterer. Bob reported that during the preceding 6 months he had earned approximately $1,200 in that fashion. The family uses food stamps and the children continue to take advantage of the free school lunch program. Currently the Hockum's pay $46 for $120 worth of food stamps every 2 weeks. The family has no investments and owes some $1800 in debts. They have no savings account; however, they do have medical and life insurance. The family also reports using a budget. They belong to the PTA, however neither Bob or Jane are office holders. They devote no time to volunteer activities and have contacted no community officials in an attempt to improve their community. They rent their house paying $125 per month, including utilities. The Hockum house is old, has seven rooms, and is very spacious. There is little furniture, and the Hockum's have no telephone. During the course of the interview, the Hockum children remained in an adjoining room watching television so the interviewer was unable to observe any family interaction. On the one to seven scale, the house would be rated at approximately a 5 or perhaps a 6.

In the 6 months preceding the interview, the family had moved from Caldwell Idaho to Nampa, Idaho where they currently live. The house is located outside the city limits on a small farm--ideal for a large family. The family subscribes to a newspaper, however, they do not subscribe to magazines. They have a family doctor and the family appears to realize the need for health services in the area of dental and medical care for the children.

PROBLEMS AND SATISFACTIONS

During the course of the interview--conducted in the dining room of the Hockum residence-- the children were mostly unobserved. Only on occasion did the children actually enter the room and interrupt the conversation that was taking place. The impression of family stability that was presented indicated that Bob was easy going, rather unconcerned about tomorrow, and could get along well with virtually everyone. Jane, however, was obstinate, unwilling to cooperate with the interviewer, and refused to fill out a number of questionnaires. In general, Jane was a disruptive factor during the entire interview. There are circumstances relating to Jane's present state of mind which may or may not have a bearing on her activities. She recently lost her father, and, as a result of his death, she was about to inherit a sizeable sum of money--in the neighborhood of $30,000. For Jane, this very substantial monetary increase was unnerving, and she appeared quite beside herself wondering what exactly to do with the money. She repeatedly asked the interviewer what he would do if he were in her situation, to which he responded that if she was uncertain, she should find a reputable lawyer to advise her. As a result of her father's recent death she constantly remarked she was very emotionally distraught and unable to clearly think or concentrate. (This was the excuse used when Jane refused to complete the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale.) Additionally, the interviewer's questions and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, Jane complained, were entirely too personal and it was nobody's business but her own what she felt about such questions. Bob on the other hand, was most helpful. When he filled out the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale he asked no questions. He simply carefully listened while the

interviewer explained the procedures necessary and immediately began working to complete the profile sheet.

The results of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale indicate that Bob is well above his peer group on all scales except two--"moral/ethical self" and "being his social self." (See Figure 4.) This could be a result of his wife's less than supportive situation on virtually all subjects. She relies heavily on religion to the extent that it has become a crutch. Unfortunately, her actions would support the hypothesis that she is, in fact, not much of a believer in Christianity. Bob, however, appears unaffected, readily accepts her as she is, and apparently makes no effort to improve or change her perceptions.

As a consequence of the inheritance received from her father's estate, the Hockum's are considering opening their own upholstery shop. A step, the interviewer suspects, which may encourage additional problems. Nevertheless, they do have the money, and Bob appears capable and already has a small, well equipped shop.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

On the Neal Seeman Powerlessness Scale, Bob received a scale score of 2, very slightly below the exited group mean. (See Figure 3.) This score would indicate that Bob has a valid perception of the world in which he lives. The two items he felt he was powerlessness in were "there is very little that we can do to keep prices from going higher," and "more and more I feel helpless in the face of what's happening in the world today." This could be interpreted as indicating that Bob

has difficulty providing for his family--which on his income is obvious.

Jane received a scale score of zero indicating she felt she had power over all items. A score interpreted as meaning she is extremely naive in dealing with the world she lives in. However, it is not out of character with other actions she displayed during the course of the interview.

The Anomie Scale received a scale score for Bob of 2, approximately the mean for his reference group. Thus, he would not be a deviant from his group in the feelings of social alienation or normlessness. Jane also received a scale score of 2 which places her well within her group mean deviations. The question both Hockum's checked agree to the statement "It's hardly fair to bring children into the world with the way things look for the future." Due to their large family and the fact that they have not had children since leaving Mountain-Plains, the Hockums are perhaps more realistic in their perception of the family. Bob also checked "These days a person doesn't really know who he can count on," indicating his lack of faith in the people around him. Jane, on the other hand, checked agreement to "In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse." However, this does not necessarily mean she feels that her lot is getting worse. Her scores on the Powerlessness Scale would indicate this is not so. Her independence in refusing to take the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale would also lead one to believe that she perceives questions as not pertaining strictly to herself.

These two scales taken in conjuction would indicate that Bob is perhaps closer

to the "normally adjusted middle class family" or at least he has that perception. Jane's scores would indicate she is perhaps more naive in dealing with the world around her than she is willing to admit. However, Bob works as a catalyst to her perception of the world, and in that sense, the family is seen as fairly well adjusted.

EMPLOYMENT

As Bob is the only member of the family that has actually held employment during the previous 6 months, the Work Alienation and Work Motivation Scales were administered only to him. (See Figure 3.) On the Work Motivation Scale, Bob received a scale score of 13, slightly below the exited group mean. This would indicate that Bob is not particularly dissatisfied with his work environment. However, on the Work Alienation Scale, he received a scale score of 2, approximately one standard deviation above the mean, indicating that Bob had a higher dislike for the actual work environment--in the sense of employer/employee relationships. On the obiesance scale, Bob registered a scale score of 3, which interestingly enough was one standard deviation above the mean, indicating that he is more willing to accept direct orders in a position of inferiority than his co-Mountain-Plains exiters. The JDI was administered to Bob and on all scales he scored above his peer group means. (See Figure 1.) On the work scale he scored nearly one standard deviation above the mean. His pay scale score was above the mean by approximately one-half standard deviation as were Bob's promtion scores. His supervision scale score was slightly above the mean, and his worker scale was above the group mean by approximately one standard deviation.

All indications are that Bob is satisfied with his work, his environment, his co-workers, and his salary. There were no scale scores below his Mountain-Plains group mean, indicating that he is one of the more satisfied members of this group. When the interviewer questioned him regarding his current working situation, Bob reported he was satisfied with his work. Indeed, the only thing he disliked were the hours--Bob felt he would rather work for himself at somewhat open hours. Generally Bob impressed the interviewer as being fairly conscientious and willing to work hard.

Jane rated housework at a scale score of 23, one standard deviation below the group mean. It must be noted that Jane had no other work experiences to compare, which leads one to suspect that, although she appears to dislike housework, she does not know what the world of work is like. Again, her personality would indicate that no matter how much she was doing, Jane would not be completely happy.

As indicated earlier, Bob is anxious to work for himself and to become self-supportive in a business sense. It is difficult to predict failure or success should Bob open his own business with the inheritance money. Bob however, indicates he is obtaining considerable part time work and he apparently feels this is sufficient for him to open his own shop. Whether or not the market will support Bob's full time venture is difficult to say.

Questioned concerning his employment, it was apparent that Bob's current employment as an upholsterer is what he enjoys doing. He provided no negative comments and his work scale in general was quite high--one standard deviation

above his group mean. The fact that he is willing to take the venture and that the family has the money to invest provides an additive to his working environment.

RATING THE MOUNTAIN-PLAINS PROGRAM

When asked to rate Mountain-Plains as an influence in their lives, Bob, without hesitation, said he thought it was a positive influence. Jane, after some deliberation, decided it was neither positive nor negative and gave it a neutral rating--keeping in mind that Jane did not take an occupational area while in the program. When asked specifically how helpful various program areas had been, Bob rated job training, math, English, work experience, consumer education, budgeting, and community development as of much help. Jane felt that math, English, consumer education, and community development were of much help. The areas they felt were of little help included Career Guidance and health. Jane also rated Early Childhood as of little help. Remaining areas were ranked as of some help, and the only category they rated as of no help was Counseling. (See Figure 5.)

When asked specifically which areas stood out, Bob replied job training, as it gave him the ability to operate and own his own shop. Jane felt that math and English stood out, because, through these program areas, she received her GED. When questioned regarding the least helpful areas, Bob replied Counseling, while Jane rated both Early Childhood and Counseling as of the least help. Bob recalled that Counseling caused too much discomfort in their family, and Jane added that Counseling questions were much too personal, that "all they wanted to find out about was the sexual parts of the married life." When asked if they would choose Mountain-Plains again, both Bob and Jane replied they probably would.

Bob felt the job skill learned at Mountain-Plains was quite adequate for the work he is engaged in, and offered no suggestions for improving occupational training. When asked if he would change his occupational choice, he replied that he would not, that he was satisfied with his current work situation. When asked to complete a DET on himself as he perceived himself before Mountain-Plains and as he currently perceives himself, Bob rated himself as negative decline in most areas. Bob felt his punctuality had decreased from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, his self-control from very satisfactory to satisfactory, and his ambition decreased from very satisfactory to satisfactory. The only aspect that he registered as an improvement was perseverance--from satisfactory to very satisfactory. Asked to complete a DET, Jane declined, huffily saying she did not wish to answer "those kind of questions." (See Table 1.)

When asked to offer suggestions to Career Guidance, both Bob and Jane agreed it should be more to the point, that the detail was too specific and it was too difficult to interpret all the fine points of Career Guidance when what they really wanted to know was the job potential in their specific area. When asked to offer suggestions to Counseling, both indicated that group counseling techniques were "bad news" and that the topics discussed were much too personal. (Jane led this portion of the discussion.) When asked if they presently felt they coped well with everyday problems, both Bob and Jane said they did. When asked which statement came nearest to describing how they felt about their life in general, both Bob and Jane said they were completely satisfied with the way things were working out. When asked about good and bad breaks, Bob said he had had good breaks in the sense that

he would now have the capital to open his business. His bad breaks, Bob replied, were limited to previous work experience. When asked what things gave him satisfaction in life, Bob replied, "I can work at what I enjoy to do." Jane felt that due to Bob's ability to "hold a steady job" and "work at what he enjoys," the family could accomplish something with their lives. When asked what things were not going just the way they wanted, Bob offered the opinion that to correct problems he would change his course of action and in this fashion be able to deal with difficulties he was encountering. Jane felt that the family's single solution to problems would be opening Bob's own shop.

Asked what gets them down the most, Jane immediately commented, "not having our own shop." Both felt that through their incentive to succeed and carry through dreams and hopes--which they were, Jane pointed out, at that point in time about to do by creating their own shop-- they could control and influence the future. Both agreed the family was quite capable of dealing with health problems and that their ability to make ends meet financially was improved since Mountain-Plains. Apparently, the Hockum's cooperate on financial spending and child rearing questions, and reported they understood their children. These items, the Hockum's say, were unaffected by Mountain-Plains.

The Hockum's leisure activities include fishing, dancing, taking trips, and going out to dinner. When asked what activities they pursued at Mountain-Plains, they said they had been active in MOWINDS Council (Student Government).

FEMALE INTERVIEW

As indicated earlier in the narrative, Jane was an uncooperative interviewee.

Again and again she alluded to the fact that her father had recently passed away and that this was "weighing pretty heavily on my mind." She could not, she said, concentrate any length of time on specifics and declined to take the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale or to fill out the DET. When prompted about specific roles and feelings in life, she replied that she was satisfied with herself physically and that she had the ability to both run the house and care for her children. Apparently, Bob helps around the house--observed to be more than she is willing to admit. Jane does not partake in any outside activities, "my family is my life," she says. At Mountain-Plains, Jane began an occupational area but did not complete it. Questioned on this subject, Jane replied that, "because of the babysitting I had to quit the training." When asked whether or not she does things just for herself, she said "No. Usually everything I do is for my family." Confident in her role as a woman, Jane says she would rather not be a man. When asked whether or not she liked herself, Jane, fast losing interest in the interview, said "I don't know." Bob, Jane says, talks to her about his job, they make decisions together, and both discipline the children. Asked if there had been changes in her husband, Jane, now thoroughly bored, said, "No". When asked if the problems they face now are any different from those before entering Mountain-Plains, she said, "No, the same problems--money." Then, smiling and coy, she said "Well . . . up 'till recently."

INTERVIEWER COMMENTS

Jane is the type that is extremely difficult to get along with while Bob is easy going, allowing Jane to be dominant and yet apparently still doing things the way he wishes. This situation, these two people together, is complementary in a sense

and, consequently, the interviewer believes their marriage will continue to be fairly stable.

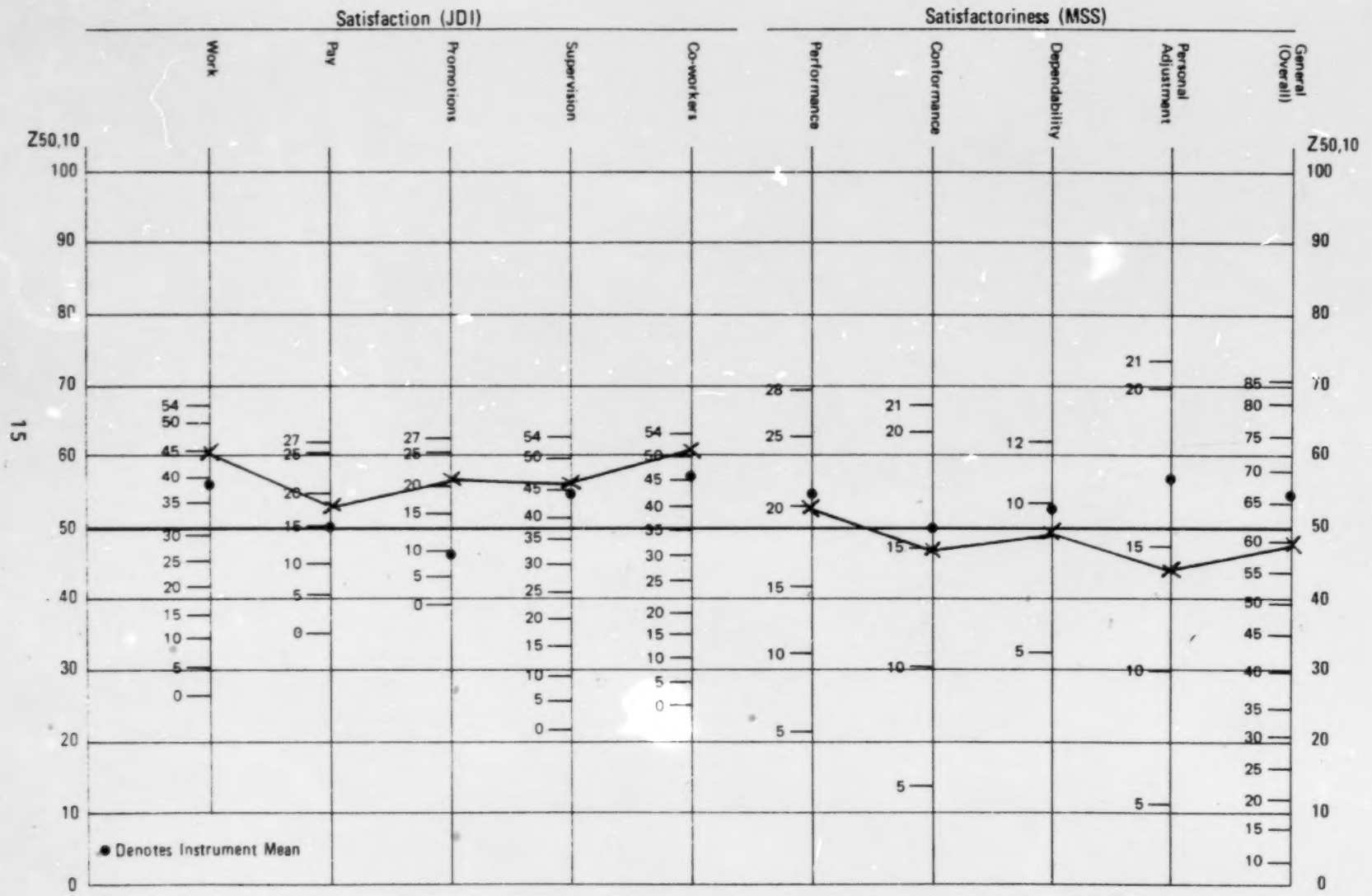
At the time of interview, the Hockum's were in a state of transition, having recently received a considerable amount of money and in something of a quandry as to what to do with it. The decision to open a shop for Bob appears to be made. Bob is the type that is very pleased to be able to say he made something and point out the creation. The Hockum's took considerable time to show the interviewer Bob's workshop--which looked as though it had been converted from a coal bin, was very small and very crowded. They pointed out each piece of equipment, explained the use of each, and took a great deal of pride in the fact that they owned each--Jane made certain the interviewer knew the exact cost of each piece of equipment.

They appear to be at a point where things may begin going their way--if the shop works out, they will be happy, if it fails, they will be lost in the same life situation they have always had. Mountain-Plains has been a positive influence due to the fact that through Mountain-Plains, Bob received the skill to become an upholsterer.

Whether or not the Hockum's could be classified as a Mountain-Plains success is questionable. They are successful in the sense that they have the ability to define goals, the ability to find and hold employment and have a salable skill. As Bob is a hard worker and more or less the "plugger" type, the interviewer feels the potential for their small family operation is fairly high.

Figure 1

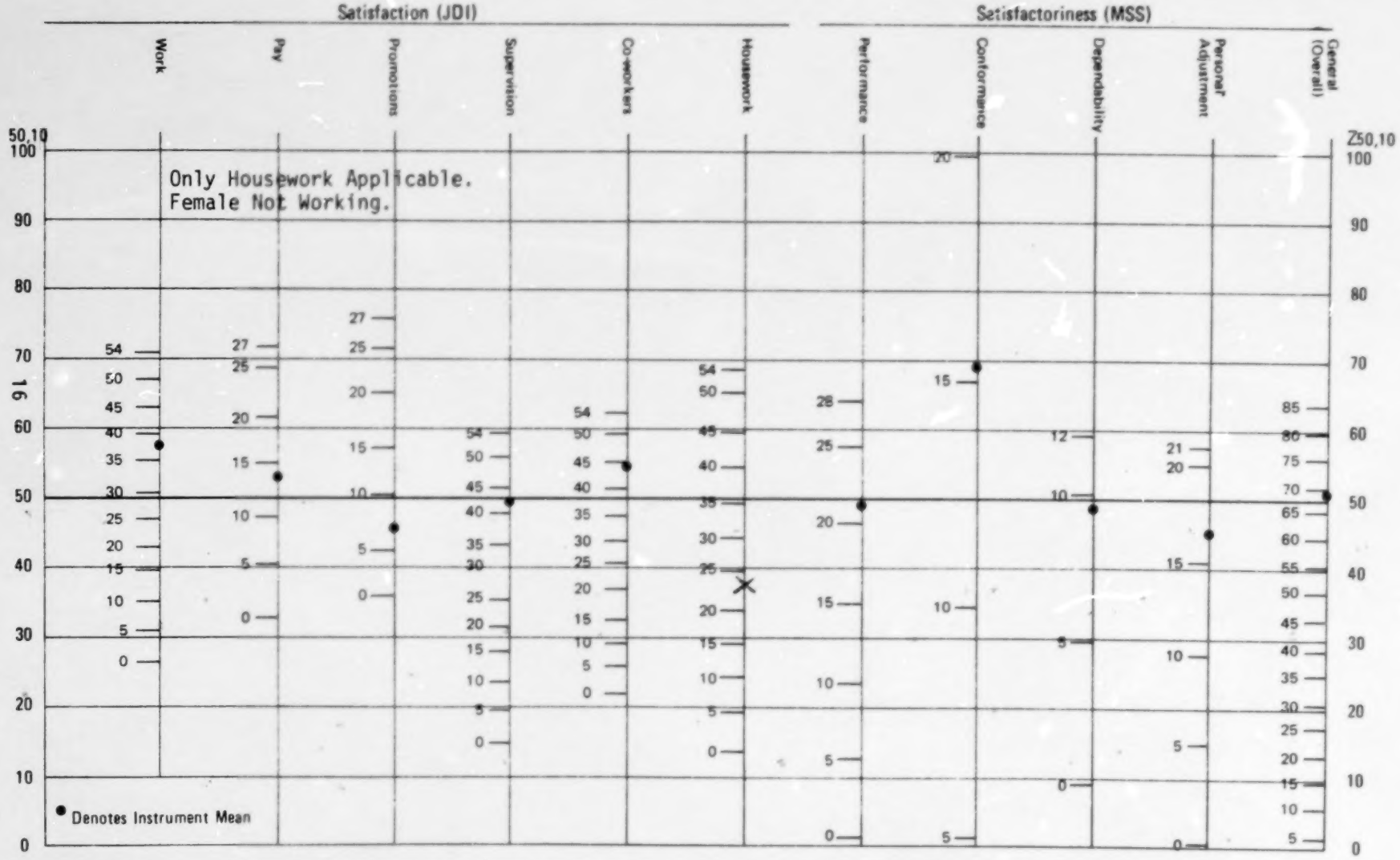
SATISFACTION AND SATISFACTORINESS – MALE



Note: Profile based on entering student scores.

Figure 2

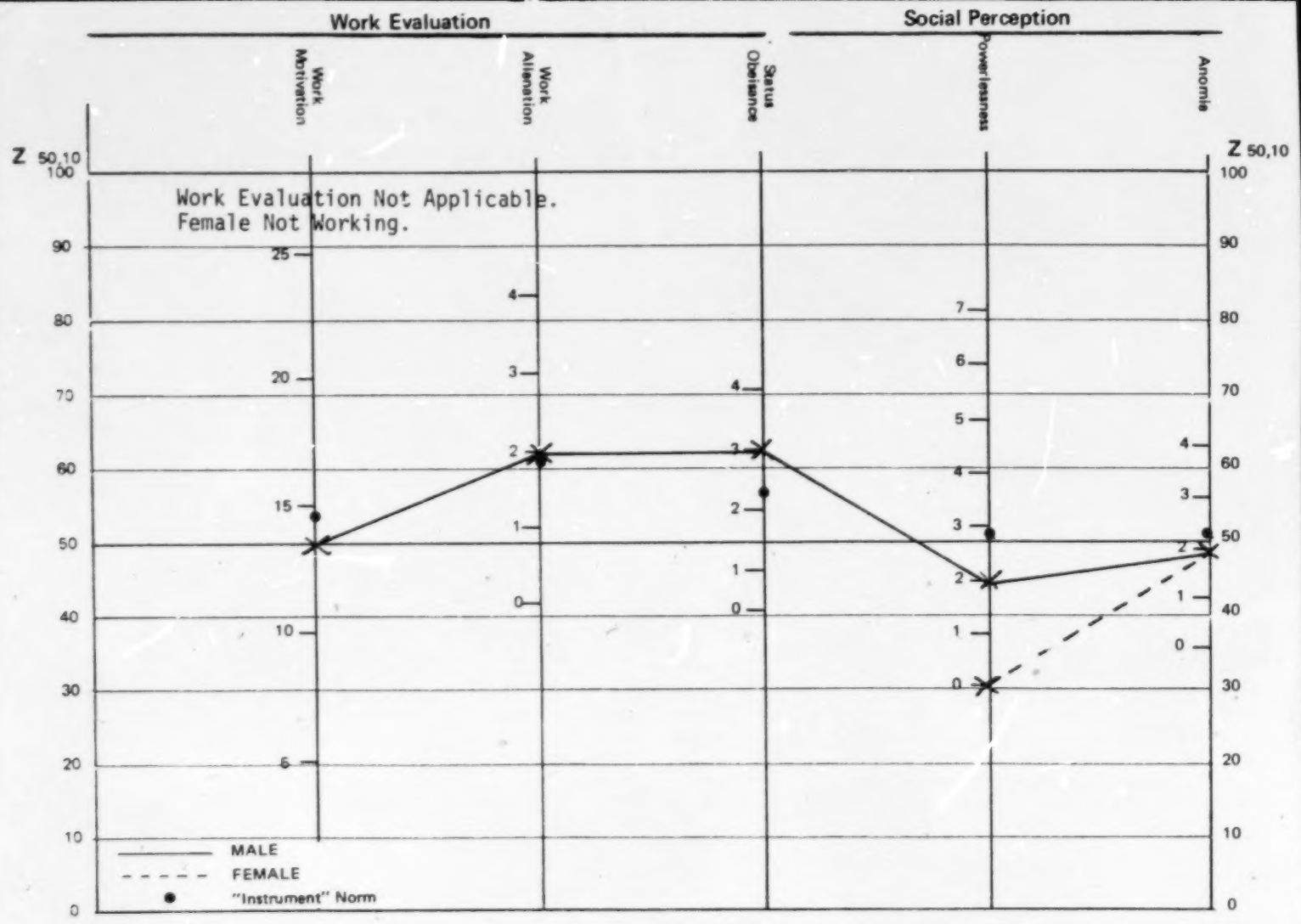
SATISFACTION AND SATISFACTORINESS – FEMALE



Note: Profile based on entering student norms except "Housework" which is based on instrument norm for employment.

Figure 3

MOTIVATION AND ALIENATION



Note: Profile derived from entering student data.

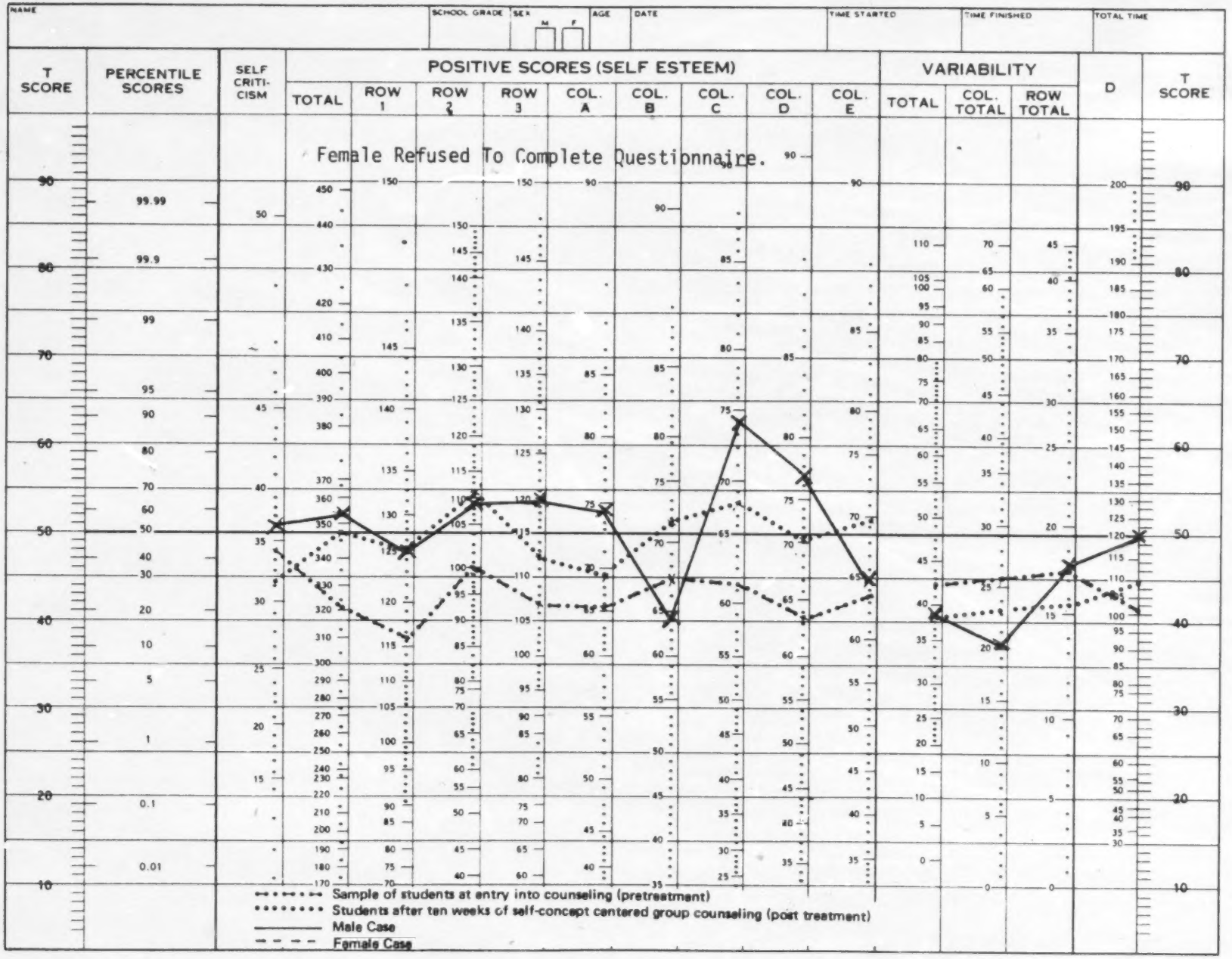
Tennessee Self Concept Scale - Figure 4

PROFILE SHEET

Counseling Form

NAME | SCHOOL GRADE | SEX M F | AGE | DATE | TIME STARTED | TIME FINISHED | TOTAL TIME

Female Refused To Complete Questionnaire.



Note: This is the standard profile sheet for the TSCS.

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Male					Female			
High		Low			Low		High	
Much	Some	Little	None		None	Little	Some	Much
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			Job Training	- - - - - - - - -		●	
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			Math	- - - - - - - - - - - -			-●
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			English	- - - - - - - - - - - -			-●
		●	- - - - -	Career Guidance	- - - - -	-●		
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			Work Experience	NA			
			● -	Counseling	- ●			
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			Consumer Education	- - - - - - - - - - - -			-●
●	- - - - - - - - - - - -			Community Development	- - - - - - - - - - - -			-●
	●	- - - - - - - -		Recreation	- - - - - - - - -		●	
		●	- - - - -	Health	- - - - -	-●		
			NA	Home Management	NA			
			NA	Early Childhood	- - - - -	-●		

FIGURE 5

UTILITY RATING OF MOUNTAIN-PLAINS PROGRAM ELEMENTS

TABLE 1

SELF RATING OF PERSONAL AND WORK TRAIT CHANGES

Male		Female	
Improved	Regressed	Improved	Regressed
Perseverance	Punctuality	Female Refused To Complete Questionnaire.	
	Self-Control		
	Ambition		

TABLE 2

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. "Rate Mountain-Plains as an influence in your life."

	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative
Male		o			
Female			x		

2. "Knowing what you know now, would you have chosen Mountain-Plains?"

	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Don't Know	Probably No	Definitely No
Male		o			
Female		x			

3. "What is your rating for your current life in general?"

	Completely Satisfied	Well Satisfied	Neither Extreme	A Little Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Male	o				
Female	x				

4. "Rate your success:

		Completely Successful 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Completely Unsuccessful 0
The year before M-P."	Male										
	Female	No Data Available.									
Now."	Male										
	Female										
Five years from now."	Male										
	Female										